



Virginia Coastal Zone MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Coastal Policy Team

Webinar Agenda

September 23, 2020

10:00am – 2:00pm

Link to CZM PowerPoint (includes all speaker presentations referenced below):

https://www.deq.virginia.gov/Portals/0/DEQ/CoastalZoneManagement/DescriptionBoundary/CPT_Meeting_Presentation_September_23_2020.pdf

10:00 Welcome

10:05 Update on finalization of new narrative enforceable policies (Bettina Rayfield)

- Environmental Impact Review and CZM staff worked with the Virginia Coastal Policy Center (VCPC) to address five sets of public comments received on Virginia's draft narrative enforceable policies. A revised document that addresses these, along with new comments from NOAA, was submitted to NOAA and final approval was expected by October 2. A date for public release of the new policies was discussed and it was agreed that it would be two weeks after NOAA's approval. The federal consistency/environmental impact review manual and website will be updated, and training will be offered at a future date. Several participants responded that they agreed with the process and supported training on the new policies. Cirse Gonzalez (CBNERR-VA) offered to help with the training effort.

10:10 Update on 2016-2020 Section 309 Strategies:

- *Coastal Hazards (Shep)*
Update was provided on 7 initiatives completed or underway to build either natural or community resilience.
 - Support for the Resilience and Adaptation Feasibility Tool (RAFT) – W&M, UVA, ODU
 - Refined scorecard, developed website
 - Regional assessments for Eastern Shore, Northern Neck and Middle Peninsula
 - Technical assistance follow-up for localities after assessments
 - Local Community Rating System (CRS) Evaluations – Wetlands Watch
 - Analysis of costs/benefits, including co-benefits
 - Recommendations for supporting local CRS positions
 - Training and preliminary evaluations/scores for localities not currently in CRS
 - Technical support for localities in CRS
 - Road Flooding Analysis – VIMS
 - Identifying areas affected by road closures due to flooding
 - Allows analysis of affected populations, including underserved communities
 - Resilience Project Database – Wetlands Watch

- Created a repository for potential resilience-building projects and populated with an initial list of projects
 - Expanded from natural resilience projects to cover a wide range of initiatives
 - Shoreline Planning and Promotion of Living Shorelines – VIMS
 - Local shoreline plans, data portals, evolution studies and decision-support tools
 - Update and expansion of an on-line version of the Shoreline Management Handbook
 - Living shoreline training for contractors and local wetland boards
 - Research & Analysis of the Beneficial Use of Dredge Material – MPPDC and VIMS
 - Evaluation of local opportunities, permitting requirements and physical characteristics for beneficial use of dredge
 - Bay Act Sea Level Rise Guidance Manual (309 Project of Special Merit) – VCPC and VIMS
 - Proposal was developed prior to 2020 legislation requiring DEQ to address flooding in Chesapeake Bay Preservation Areas
- *Cumulative & Secondary Impacts (CSI) - Lower Chickahominy Watershed Project Overview (Jeff)*
 - Sarah Stewart of PlanRVA serves as the project lead. Ben McFarlane of HRPDC joined the planning team. Subcontracts have been executed with UVA-IEN, GMU, DWR, DCR, & VCPC. Study area includes Charles City, New Kent and James City County. This area was selected due to its high ecological value per Coastal VEVA GIS layer.
 - Yr 1: DCR/DWR completed resource inventory to update Natural Heritage Database for project review. Old data would have expired.
 - Yr 2: Econ study of conserved lands by GMU showed no cost burden to the local governments.
 - Yr 3: Included preliminary stakeholder engagement w/ UVA-IEN (thought leader interviews, focus group meetings, survey) & GMU sustainable economic development study.
 - Yr 4: Focused on in-depth/targeted stakeholder engagement: tribal meetings, local government meeting, **July 22**: tribal/local government workshop, **Aug 18**: Stakeholder Summit – breakout groups.
 - Yr 5: Next steps in Sep/Oct are to discuss an MOU for a watershed partnership.
- *Ocean Resources (Laura)*
 - Continued to fund the Ocean Planning Stakeholder Engagement liaison at VCU to relay the needs of the fishing industry to the offshore wind industry.
 - He is also relaying research needs regarding fisheries and offshore wind to Ellen Bolen of MRC and me as Virginia reps on the new Responsible Offshore Science Alliance.
 - Continuing to work with EIR on development of Geographic Location Descriptions for important fishing areas in order to weigh on federal consistency issues regarding placement of offshore wind turbines.

- Efforts have included grants to The Nature Conservancy to work on tools for the MARCO ocean data portal. An FY18 grant was completed that created a tool to show animations of shifts in core abundance of 18 fish species by decade since the 1970's. An FY19 grant is underway to develop an offshore wind siting tool that lets users identify a potential wind farm area and receive a report of the relative abundance and biodiversity of species found in that area.
- *Marine Debris (Laura)*
 - Work continued on the balloon release reduction social marketing campaign & a new website was created (<https://www.preventballoonlitter.org/>).
 - An update of the 2014 VA Marine Debris Reduction Plan was kicked off during a March 2020 leadership team meeting. We hope to complete it this winter after analyzing input from the leadership team and stakeholders.
 - A new Virginia Plastic Pollution Prevention Network website (<https://www.ban.org/plastic-pollution-prevention>) was launched on 9/15/20. It was developed by Clean VA Waterways under their CZM grant. Contact Katie Register (registerkm@longwood.edu) to join.
 - The link to a new animated balloon litter video was shared: (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hw8-caqsM8M>).

10:26 Q&A

10:30 Update on FY2017-2019 Focal Area Grants:

- *Coastal Resiliency (Shep)*
Shep provided an update on progress for four resilience projects: FY17 & FY18 completed, FY19 due this fall.
 - Expanding Natural Infrastructure - VIMS
 - Data for shoreline management incorporated into local comprehensive plans
 - Calculated potential TMDL nutrient load credits of living shorelines
 - Assessment of the capacity of living shorelines to enhance coastal resiliency
 - Living Shoreline Performance & Adaptive Management - VIMS
 - Determined the effectiveness and habitat value of LS over time for various settings and LS ages
 - Evaluated the impact of sea level rise on LS and developed adaptive management strategies
 - Building Resiliency in NOVA through Regional Collaboration - NVRC
 - Supported the NOVA Climate Resiliency Team
 - Developed a risk characterization matrix to assess vulnerability of critical infrastructure
 - Developed and piloted a resiliency index
 - Developed a monitoring plan for living shorelines in NV
 - Determining Vulnerability to Sea Level Rise Based on Elevation Data – HRPDC
 - Developed a regional 1st floor elevation database for statistical analysis
 - Explored alternatives for estimating 1st floor elevations

- Documented best practices
- *Oyster Aquaculture (Laura)*
 Laura gave an update on the status of this grant to VIMS (now in its 3rd year), including the Year 2 deliverables. Tony Watkinson of VMRC also provided comments:
 - SAV coverage is far greater than aquaculture coverage and no evidence was found of aquaculture impeding SAV expansion.
 - VMRC staff was hoping its Aquaculture Management Advisory Committee would vote on a new guidance document for use plans at the August AMAC meeting, but it was pushed to the September meeting. Tony reported that at the September meeting votes were split and the industry still had concerns.
 - Final year of the grant will address other stakeholder use conflicts such as recreation and viewshed. VIMS will document how small the aquaculture footprint would be even with expansion, but also where that footprint is in relation to other users will be key. Project is currently scheduled to end in March 2021.
- *Eco-tourism Promotion (Laura)*
 - Rural PDCs (AN, MP, NN) completed a marketing plan to promote the water trails that incorporates the Oyster Trail and the Birding & Wildlife trail.
 - AN-PDC certified 19 new ecotour guides last winter and is planning the 2021 course & recertification. The courses will include a requirement that guides demonstrate an understanding of access rules for lands held in conservation ownership by USFWS, DCR, DWR, & TNC.
 - MPPDC is working on an economic analysis of the impact of ecotourism on their region.
 - NNPDC integrating their water trails with the Captain John Smith trail and preparing for an Ecotourism Outfitters workshop.

10:42 Q&A

- 10:50 Update on DEQ Water Division's FY 2020 Section 309 Project of Special Merit Proposal & Related Legislation (Justin Williams, DEQ)
- VCPC and VIMS will be working with DEQ to develop a guidance manual on adapting to flooding and sea level rise in Chesapeake Bay Preservation Areas.
 - Draft regulations are being developed in response to legislation passed by the General Assembly regarding flooding adaption in Chesapeake Bay Preservation Areas. These are expected to be presented to the State Water Control Board at either its winter or spring Meeting.

11:00 Q&A

- 11:10 New FY2021-2025 Section 309 strategies: ocean resources, marine debris, coastal hazards and new Focal Area (Laura, Shep)
- New Resilience Focal Area Projects:
 - *PDC Resiliency* – Planning district commissions will initiate or continue efforts to enhance local and regional resilience through coordination w/ local, state, & federal governments. Key tasks include expanding the

Coastal Zone Resilience Projects Database, helping to develop and implement a Coastal Resilience Master Plan, and providing technical assistance to local governments on resilience issues. Additional funding is being added to each PDC's technical assistance grants for this purpose.

- *Conservation Targeting for Resilience* – VIMS will collaborate w/ DWR, DCR Natural Heritage Program, and VMRC to develop spatially explicit projections of shifts in coastal habitats and their cascading impacts on natural communities and native species throughout the Tidewater region due to climate change & sea level rise.
 - *Promoting Ecotourism to Support Conserved Lands & Resilient Communities* – Rural coastal PDC's will build off the current ecotourism focal area by improving ecotourism related opportunities, resources, and trainings that help to protect economic resiliency and support the economic value of conservation lands.
 - *Advancing Resiliency in Virginia's Coastal Zone by Supporting Climate-Adaptive Nearshore Natural & Nature-Based Restoration Projects* - CBNERRVA will support development of a York-Piankatank-Mobjack Bay nearshore restoration "community of practice" to collectively advance coastal community resilience projects. Funding will also support creation of detailed design plans for one climate adaptive project in this area.
- New Section 309 grants will start with FY 2021 award with a total of \$503K each year.
 - New Coastal Hazards Strategy (Shep):
 - Will evaluate opportunities to build resilience through Virginia's updated enforceable policies.
 - Will develop a "next generation" of shoreline management plans that incorporate resilience issues and contain preliminary designs for living shoreline projects.
 - Will continue building local resilience through RAFT and CRS evaluations and technical assistance.
 - Lance Gregory (VDH) asked if there were any proposals or plans on NOAA Coastal Impacts on SLR grant in VA.
 - John Kuriawa (NOAA) had no updates.
 - Ann Phillips (OSNR) has discussed transportation aspect of the grant with HRPDC; no one has come back with anything yet, but could improve capacity & modeling ability.
 - Ben McFarlane (HRPDC): transportation aspect would dovetail nicely with existing tools & efforts, including vulnerability modelling, existing datasets, studies on how roads respond to more frequent flooding, existing collaboration with the Volpe Center in Massachusetts & VDOT. Would encourage others to use this forum to coordinate & strategize. VA has not been successful in getting a grant yet.
 - Marcia Berman (VIMS) not aware of any new proposals; VIMS working with VDOT on road vulnerability study & assessing future ecological impacts from SLR (5 year project).
 - Ocean Resources (Laura)

- An Ocean Planning Committee will be established to develop a Virginia Ocean Plan. This is needed due to the dissolution of the intergovernmental Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body in 2018 by Executive Order.
- The plan will include
 - evaluation of potential additional commercial wind energy lease areas
 - continuation of a subcontract to VA Commonwealth University to continue work with Virginia's commercial and recreational fishermen to ensure important fishing areas are protected
 - further development and implementation of an ocean acidification plan to build on work MRC is commencing in 2020
 - identification of potential offshore aquaculture areas
 - Identification of ecologically rich areas and ways to improve their protection
 - A subcontract to the Virginia Coastal Policy Center to help facilitate development of the plan and identify ways to reduce user conflicts.
 - funds for additional data collection, analysis and/or synthesis
- Becky Gwynn (DWR) would like help with development of the VA Ocean Plan & noted that the DWR Sea Turtle Plan is almost complete, but need to get back to developing the Marine Mammal Action Plan. VA Ocean Plan would help to prioritize these efforts.
- Tony Watkinson (VMRC) has jurisdiction out to 3 miles and would be happy to participate. Ellen Bolen (VMRC) stated also expressed interest in assisting.
- Ken Jurman (DMME) also interested in helping develop the VA Ocean Plan. DMME has a new Division of Offshore Wind. New manufacturers are interested in setting up in the Port of VA. Ken was not sure of the status of Dominion's Construction & Operation Plan, but will check the BOEM website to see status. The COP is expected to be completed by the end of 2020.
- Ellen Bolen (VMRC): will engage with ocean/coastal & Chesapeake Bay participants in development of the VA Ocean Acidification Plan in advance of this VA Ocean Plan work which will begin in October 2021.
- Marine Debris (Laura)
 - The 2014 Marine Debris Reduction Plan will be updated this winter so that actions can be worked upon through the FY21-25 Marine Debris Strategy. Also results from the new Plastic Waste Prevention Advisory Council set up by General Assembly will also be addressed as deemed appropriate by the Council.

11:30 Seabird Habitat Restoration in Hampton Roads (Becky Gwyn, DWR)

- VDOT expansion of the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel included construction on 10-acre South Island, which ~25K seabirds have been using as nesting/migratory stopover habitat. It supported VA's largest seabird colony. Gov. Northam issued a

directive on 2/14/20 to create a new habitat area for these birds in response to Federal deregulation of incidental take of migratory birds in permitting requirements. New areas were created and nesting and colonization was extremely successful due to the hard work of the project team & the swift interagency coordination.

11:45 Resilience Project Proposal Sortable Database Update (Ross Weaver, Wetlands Watch)

- Ross provided a live demonstration of the database and noted that 113 projects were currently included with about 300 additional projects ready to add. He noted that the types of projects included have evolved over the course of the project from only shovel-ready nature-based projects to a broad range of resilience projects. It includes only potential projects, not completed projects. It also includes an inventory of available grants.
- He asked if projects should be prioritized in the database, and if so, how. There was general support for the ability to prioritize and alternatives were discussed including tier of prioritization, but CPT members agreed that more input was necessary on this topic. It was clarified that a spreadsheet of projects could be uploaded into the database in bulk. Ross also indicated that a function could be added to total the amount of all projects combined.
- CPT members expressed concern that projects developed for other purposes were included in the database, and made public, without proper vetting by the PDCs. In the future Wetlands Watch will communicate with PDCs and other project proponents prior to adding projects to the database and will remove the link to the database from its website until that time.
- There was discussion of the need for coordination with the PDCs' technical assistance grant tasks for developing projects for inclusion in the database. The PDCs will begin developing and considering resilience projects as part of their grants starting October 1, 2020.

12:00 Lunch

12:30 VA Coastal Resilience Master Planning Framework (Ann Phillips)

- Coastal Resilience in Virginia: A Framework will be released by the Governor's office in about one month and includes input from many Coastal Policy Team reviewers. At this point it is more of a "plan for a plan." There was discussion of the process for moving forward with the next phase of plan development and a review of the seven guiding principles.
- The Framework is based on an initial assessment of actions that have been taken or are underway to build resilience in Virginia and is intended to withstand changes in administrations by aligning agency programs, integrate resiliency throughout those programs, and promoting collaboration. There is an emphasis on environmental justice throughout the document.
- Certain Commonwealth-wide needs for building resilience are identified in the Framework, including the need for consistent dedicated funding. There was a review of potential funding sources and resilience legislation that may be considered by the 2021 General Assembly.
- It was noted that the next phase of plan development will include a robust stakeholder input process. Policy team members observed, however, that there could have been more effective engagement on the Framework so far, and on other initiatives currently underway like the resilience database, Bay Act project of special merit and other state resilience efforts. It was noted that more involvement from stakeholders should result in better products.

- Laura offered for CZM to set up a meeting to help coordinate between the Framework and the work of the PDCs through their resilience technical assistance grants, which are intended to help with plan development and implementation. PDC representatives also indicated that they intended for the PDCs to coordinate with each other through their grants in order to provide consistent feedback.

1:00 Q&A

1:15 Resilience Academy (Elizabeth Andrews, VCPC)

- VCPC sought feedback from the CPT on whether some form of resilience training or a resilience academy would be beneficial, and viable, for Virginia. An overview was provided of initiatives from Maryland's Climate Leadership Academy, Washington's Coastal Training Program, the World Bank's City Climate Planner Certificate, the Climate Reality Leadership Corps, EPA's Climate Change Adaptation Training program, and DEQ's Climate Change Training for in-house staff.
- CBNERRVA and DEQ's Training Program staff expressed interested in helping develop a resilience training program.
- Planning District Commission representatives had previously suggested using the Virginia Natural Resources Leadership Institute as a model, and possibly building on its existing framework.
- Responses by CPT members to a series of polling questions showed full support for some form of training and broad support for offering training for all sectors through a partnership of organizations. There was an even split on whether there should be a fee for training. Sea level rise and flooding were identified as the priority issues to be addressed.
- It was noted that another benefit of establishing a resilience academy would be the on-going community of practice that could be maintained among alumni of the academy through subsequent meetings and training opportunities.

1:25 Q&A

1:30 Updates

- Agency Updates
 - VMRC reported that over \$4 million in CARES Act funds will go to **Fisheries Disaster Relief**. However that will not be enough because there was an approximately \$100 million loss to the fisheries sector from March-May. The application for funds will open in October with all money allocated by December. Lewis Gillingham (VMRC) provided a link to the full report: https://mrc.virginia.gov/Notices/2020/VA_DR_Spend_Plan_Final.pdf.
 - VMRC noted that they are asking the Maryland Port Administration to stop putting sand from their **maintenance dredging at Wolf Trap** off Gwynn's Island and look for beneficial use opportunities around the Bay. There will be 6-8 meetings to identify appropriate areas to transfer the sand.
 - Laura asked VMRC if it would be helpful to convene a work group to map locations of **derelict vessels** and explore ways to fund removal. VMRC noted the huge expense of removal and the legal aspects of confirming ownership. MPPDC suggested development of a new legal process would be helpful. Laura suggested a meeting with interested parties to discuss legal aspects of the effort. VCPC, MPPDC, NNPDC, & DHR all expressed interest. John Kuriawa cautioned that the CPT should consider where vessel removal ranks among all the CZM priorities. Elizabeth

Andrews (VCPC) provided a link to an article on how this issue was being handled in FL: <https://www.boatus.com/expert-advice/expert-advice-archive/2020/september/when-good-boats-go-bad>. DHR is now surveying historic places along the coast and along rivers in Virginia that were submitted for the survey project. The Chickahominy River was not submitted as a river to be surveyed. However, VA CZM asked PlanRVA to discuss with DHR the possibility of the Chickahominy being surveyed. DHR also recently funded an assessment of some abandoned vessels in the Nansemond River: https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/NGF_final2_for_Web.pdf.

- Update on **land acquisitions**: Cape Charles & Chickahominy (Laura)
 - Cape Charles: closing is set for 9/24/20 - \$658K in VA CZM funds.
 - Chickahominy: Chief Adkins has identified a potential parcel in Charles City County with great ecotourism potential and water access. It could also provide an appropriate site for re-interment of remains.
- Prioritizing **mapping needs for Bay & Ocean** (Nick)
 - NOAA launched a spatial priorities study to identify areas that are priority for mapping.
 - Virginia agencies will be asked by VA CZM to answer a Mid-Atlantic survey and VA CZM will provide the synthesized result to NOAA and MARCO.
 - VA will be given the largest weight (30%) in prioritizing mapping in the Mid-Atlantic (compared to NY, NJ, DE and MD) due to the amount of shoreline in Virginia.
 - Please contact Nick Meade if you would like to participate.
- Virginia **CZM Magazine and Webpages**: Virginia Witmer announced tentative dates of mid-Dec 2020 for digital copy release and early Jan 2021 for hardcopy release. She also presented the navigation for the new DEQ website which is expected to launch in early/mid Dec 2020.

2:00 Adjourn

Attendees:

Elizabeth Andrews, VCPC
April Bahen, CZM
John Bateman, NNPDC
Sharon Baxter, DEQ
Steve Begg, VDOT
Marcia Berman, VIMS
Ellen Bolen, VMRC
Jason Bulluck, DCR
Angela Davis, DCR
Ray Fernald, DWR
John Fisher, DEQ
Jefferson Flood, CZM
Kate Gibson, GWRC
Lewis Gillingham, VMRC
Cirse Gonzalez, CBNERR
Lance Gregory, VDH
Becky Gwynn, DWR
Scott Hardaway, VIMS
Lisa Hardy, DEQ

Michelle Henicheck, DEQ
Ken Jurman, DMME
John Kuriawa, NOAA
Terry Lasher, DOF
V'lent Lassiter, DEQ
Lewie Lawrence, MPPDC
Ben McFarlane, HRPDC
Laura McKay, CZM
Nick Meade, CZM
Debbie Messmer, VDEM
Corey Miles, NVRC
Shep Moon, CZM
Elizabeth Moore, DHR
Denise Nelson, GWRC
Taylor Parker, VDOT
Ann Phillips, OSNR
Meghann Quinn, DEQ
Bettina Rayfield, DEQ
Jackie Rickards, MPPDC

Jay Ruffa, Crater PDC
Daniel Salkovitz, DEQ
Scott Sandridge, VASG
Curt Smith, MPPDC
Jessica Steelman, A-NPDC
Sarah Stewart, PlanRVA

Carl Thiel-Goin, DCR
Lyle Varnell, VIMS
Tony Watkinson, VMRC
Ross Weaver, Wetlands Watch
Justin Williams, DEQ
Virginia Witmer, CZM